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WASHINGTON (AP) - Adm. Stansfield Turner, a Naval Academy classmate of President Carter, will be nominated to head the Central Intelligence Agency, the White House announced Monday.

Turner, 56, is commander-in-chief of U.S. forces in southern Europe. Asked why Carter chose Turner, White House Press Secretary Jody Powell said: "The major reason is his (Carter's) feeling this is a person who has his complete trust."

Theodore Sorenson, Carter's first choice for the spy post, withdrew his nomination last month in the face of Senate opposition.

Carter informed the Cabinet about his selection Monday morning, saying he never knew Turner as a midshipman. White House spokesman Rex Granum said,

"He was so far ahead of us that we never considered him competition or even a peer and I'm not exaggerating," Granum quoted Carter as telling the Cabinet. "I think you'll all be pleased with Stan Turner. I have never known a better military person."

Granum said Carter described Turner as "a superior No. 1 academic, a superb all-around athlete" and a "five-striper," the top rank for a midshipman.

"I think as you meet him you will find him a military person who in the future could be the next George Marshall," a reference to the former Army chief-of-staff who became secretary of state under President Harry S Truman, Carter told the Cabinet.

Turner and Carter were members of the class of 1947 at Annapolis, graduating in 1946 because of the accelerated academic program stemming from World War II.

Turner finished first academically in the class. Carter ranked 59th. Turner attended Oxford University in England as a Rhodes Scholar after leaving the Naval Academy to work on a masters degree.

He then held various assignments at sea, including command of a minesweeper, a destroyer and a guided-missile frigate.

He was president of the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., in 1972-73, and commander of the U.S. Second Fleet and a North Atlantic Treaty Organization

A YEAR LATER THE NATIVE OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILL., BECAME COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE SOUTHERN EUROPE FORCE.

POWELL SAID TURNER'S BACKGROUND IN BOTH ACADEMIC AND MILITARY AFFAIRS WAS A FACTOR IN CARTER'S DECISION. BUT POWELL SAID THERE WAS NO INCLINATION TO LOOK FOR A MILITARY MAN OR TO AVOID A MILITARY MAN.

POWELL SAID CARTER WAS CONVINCED TURNER WOULD BE ABLE TO DIVORCE HIMSELF FROM HIS NAVAL ORIENTATION. THE PRESS SECRETARY SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER A CONCERN FOR THE REPORTED NAVAL BUILDUP BY THE SOVIET UNION WAS A FACTOR IN THE CHOICE.

GRANUM SAID CARTER WANTS TO INTRODUCE TURNER TO THE CABINET TO REVIEW THE CIA'S JOB AND "THE SERVICES IT HAS TO OFFER FOR MEMBERS OF THE CABINET."

"THE CIA HAS A LEGITIMATE RESPONSIBILITY NOT TO DEAL JUST IN WAR BUT TO PROVIDE INFORMATION THAT CAN RESULT IN PEACE!" GRANUM QUOTED CARTER AS TELLING THE CABINET.

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